

REMARKS

The present Amendment is in response to the Examiner's Office Action mailed August 27, 2003. Claims 1-4, 6-11, 13-20 and 30-35 are cancelled. Claims 21-29 are now pending in view of the above amendments.

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments to the claims and the following remarks. For the Examiner's convenience and reference, Applicant's remarks are presented in the order in which the corresponding issues were raised in the Office Action.

I. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) and 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

The Examiner rejects claims 1-3, 7-10, 14-17, 20 and 30-35 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by European Patent Application No. 0725289 to *Takahashi*. Further, the Examiner rejects claims 4, 6, 11, 13, 18 and 19 as being obvious in view of the *Takahashi* reference.

Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's characterization of the *Takahashi* reference with respect to the presently claimed invention. However, by way of this amendment, each of the rejected claims has been cancelled without prejudice, and thus the rejection is now moot. Applicant's reserve the right to pursue the subject matter of the cancelled claims in a separate application.

II. Allowed Subject Matter

The Examiner's allowance of claims 21-29 is appreciated.

The Applicant's submit the following comments concerning the Examiner's statements of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter in paragraph 10 of the Office Action. Applicant agrees with the Examiner that the claimed invention of claims 21-29 is patentable over the prior art, but respectfully disagrees with the Examiners statement of reasons for allowance as set forth in paragraph 10. A pplicant submits that it is the claim as a whole, rather than any particular limitation, that makes each of the claims allowable. No single limitation should be construed as the reason for allowance of a claim because it is each of the elements of the claim that makes it allowable. Therefore, Applicant's do not concede that the reasons for allowable subject matter given by the Examiner are the only reasons that make, or would make, the claims

allowable and do not make any admission or concession concerning the Examiner's statement in paragraph 10 of the Office Action.

CONCLUSION

In light of the Amendments and the arguments set forth above, Applicants earnestly believe that they are entitled to a letters patent, and respectfully solicit the Examiner to expedite prosecution of this patent application to issuance. Should the Examiner have any questions, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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